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Amendments to the Claims

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (canceled)
2. (previously presented) The assembly of claim 5, wherein the rigid outer frame is made from removably connected rigid tubes.
3. (previously presented) The assembly of claim 5, wherein the substantially horizontal rigid segment includes a plurality of removably connected rigid tubes.
4. (previously presented) The assembly of claim 5, wherein the plurality of end panels are two end panels.
5. (previously presented) A bed guard assembly, comprising:
a plurality of end panels;
flexible connecting material for placement beneath a mattress; and
connection pieces that connect the flexible connecting material to the end panels such that at least one end panel of the plurality of end panels opposes another end panel of the plurality of end panels when the flexible connecting material is disposed beneath a mattress;
wherein the end panels include a rigid outer frame and a substantially horizontal rigid segment spanning an interior of the outer frame; and

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wherein the flexible connecting material includes strips of webbing.

6. (original) The assembly of claim 5, wherein the strips of webbing include a first strip of webbing connected to first ends of the end panels, and a second strip of webbing connected to second ends of the end panels.

7. (original) The assembly of claim 5, wherein the strips of webbing are made of a material including nylon.

8. (previously presented) The assembly of claim 5, wherein the rigid outer frame is metal.

9. (previously presented) The assembly of claim 5, wherein the rigid outer frame is steel.

10. (canceled)

11. (canceled)

12. (previously presented) The assembly of claim 13, wherein the substantially horizontal rigid segment is slidably coupled to the substantially parallel opposing side portions.

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13. (previously presented) A bed guard assembly, comprising:
a plurality of end panels;
flexible connecting material for placement beneath a mattress; and
connection pieces that connect the flexible connecting material to the end panels
such that at least one end panel of the plurality of end panels opposes another end panel
of the plurality of end panels when the flexible connecting material is disposed beneath a
mattress;
wherein the end panels include a rigid outer frame and a substantially horizontal
rigid segment spanning an interior of the outer frame;
wherein the rigid outer frame includes substantially parallel opposing top and
bottom portions connected to substantially parallel opposing side portions;
wherein the substantially horizontal rigid segment is coupled to the substantially
parallel opposing side portions; and
wherein the assembly further comprises fasteners that fix a position of the
substantially horizontal rigid segment with respect to the substantially parallel opposing
side portions.

14. (previously presented) A bed guard assembly, comprising:
a plurality of end panels;
flexible connecting material for placement beneath a mattress; and
connection pieces that connect the flexible connecting material to the end panels
such that at least one end panel of the plurality of end panels opposes another end panel

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of the plurality of end panels when the flexible connecting material is disposed beneath a mattress;

wherein the end panels include a rigid outer frame and a substantially horizontal rigid segment spanning an interior of the outer frame;

wherein the rigid outer frame includes substantially parallel opposing top and bottom portions connected to substantially parallel opposing side portions;

wherein the substantially horizontal rigid segment is coupled to the substantially parallel opposing side portions; and

wherein the assembly further comprises a plurality of fasteners, selected ones of which fix the substantially horizontal rigid segment at a selected position with respect to the substantially parallel opposing side portions, corresponding to the selected ones of the fasteners.

15. (previously presented) A bed guard assembly, comprising:

a plurality of end panels;

flexible connecting material for placement beneath a mattress; and

connection pieces that connect the flexible connecting material to the end panels such that at least one end panel of the plurality of end panels opposes another end panel of the plurality of end panels when the flexible connecting material is disposed beneath a mattress;

wherein the end panels include a rigid outer frame and a substantially horizontal rigid segment spanning an interior of the outer frame;

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wherein the rigid outer frame includes substantially parallel opposing top and bottom portions connected to substantially parallel opposing side portions; and

wherein the assembly further comprises:

first fastener portions coupled to the substantially parallel opposing side portions;
and

second fastener portions, coupled to the substantially horizontal rigid segment, which mate with corresponding ones of the first fastener portions to fix a position of the substantially horizontal rigid segment with respect to the substantially parallel opposing side portions.

16. (previously presented) A bed guard assembly, comprising:
a plurality of end panels;
flexible connecting material for placement beneath a mattress; and
connection pieces that connect the flexible connecting material to the end panels such that at least one end panel of the plurality of end panels opposes another end panel of the plurality of end panels when the flexible connecting material is disposed beneath a mattress;

wherein the end panels include a rigid outer frame and a substantially horizontal rigid segment spanning an interior of the outer frame;

wherein the rigid outer frame includes substantially parallel opposing top and bottom portions connected to substantially parallel opposing side portions;

wherein the substantially horizontal rigid segment is coupled to the substantially parallel opposing side portions;

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wherein the assembly further comprises fasteners coupled to the substantially parallel opposing side portions; and

wherein the substantially horizontal rigid segment includes apertures that mate with corresponding ones of the fasteners to fix a position of the substantially horizontal rigid segment with respect to the substantially parallel opposing side portions.

17. (canceled)

18. (previously presented) A bed guard assembly, comprising:

a plurality of end panels;

flexible connecting material for placement beneath a mattress; and

connection pieces that connect the flexible connecting material to the end panels such that at least one end panel of the plurality of end panels opposes another end panel of the plurality of end panels when the flexible connecting material is disposed beneath a mattress;

wherein the end panels include a rigid outer frame and a substantially horizontal rigid segment spanning an interior of the outer frame;

wherein the rigid outer frame includes substantially parallel opposing top and bottom portions connected to substantially parallel opposing side portions;

wherein the substantially horizontal rigid segment is coupled to the substantially parallel opposing side portions;

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wherein the substantially horizontal rigid segment includes a tubular horizontal portion having first and second end portions that couple with the substantially parallel opposing side portions; and

wherein the tubular horizontal portion includes a plurality of slidably attached tubular segments.

19. (previously presented) A bed guard assembly, comprising:

a plurality of end panels;

flexible connecting material for placement beneath a mattress; and

connection pieces that connect the flexible connecting material to the end panels such that at least one end panel of the plurality of end panels opposes another end panel of the plurality of end panels when the flexible connecting material is disposed beneath a mattress;

wherein the end panels include a rigid outer frame and a substantially horizontal rigid segment spanning an interior of the outer frame;

wherein the rigid outer frame includes substantially parallel opposing top and bottom portions connected to substantially parallel opposing side portions;

wherein the substantially horizontal rigid segment is coupled to the substantially parallel opposing side portions;

wherein the substantially horizontal rigid segment includes a tubular horizontal portion having first and second end portions that couple with the substantially parallel opposing side portions; and

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wherein the first and second end portions are substantially vertically-oriented tubes that slide over the respective substantially parallel opposing side portions.

20. (previously presented) A bed guard assembly, comprising:
a plurality of end panels;
flexible connecting material for placement beneath a mattress; and
connection pieces that connect the flexible connecting material to the end panels such that at least one end panel of the plurality of end panels opposes another end panel of the plurality of end panels when the flexible connecting material is disposed beneath a mattress;

wherein the end panels include a rigid outer frame and a substantially horizontal rigid segment spanning an interior of the outer frame;

wherein the rigid outer frame includes substantially parallel opposing top and bottom portions connected to substantially parallel opposing side portions;

wherein the substantially horizontal rigid segment is coupled to the substantially parallel opposing side portions;

wherein the substantially horizontal rigid segment includes a tubular horizontal portion having first and second end portions that couple with the substantially parallel opposing side portions;

wherein the assembly further comprises fasteners coupled to the substantially parallel opposing side portions; and

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wherein the first and second end portions include apertures that communicate with the fasteners to fix a position of the substantially horizontal rigid segment with respect to the substantially parallel opposing side portions.

21. (previously presented) A bed guard assembly, comprising:

a plurality of end panels;

flexible connecting material for placement beneath a mattress; and

connection pieces that connect the flexible connecting material to the end panels such that at least one end panel of the plurality of end panels opposes another end panel of the plurality of end panels when the flexible connecting material is disposed beneath a mattress;

wherein the end panels include a rigid outer frame and a substantially horizontal rigid segment spanning an interior of the outer frame;

wherein the rigid outer frame includes substantially parallel opposing top and bottom portions connected to substantially parallel opposing side portions;

wherein the substantially horizontal rigid segment is coupled to the substantially parallel opposing side portions;

wherein the substantially horizontal rigid segment includes a tubular horizontal portion having first and second end portions that couple with the substantially parallel opposing side portions;

wherein the assembly further comprises fasteners coupled to the substantially parallel opposing side portions; and

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wherein the first and second end portions include a plurality of apertures, including selected ones that communicate with the fasteners to fix the substantially horizontal rigid segment at a position with respect to the substantially parallel opposing side portions corresponding to the selected ones of the plurality of apertures.

22. (original) The assembly of claim 20, wherein the substantially parallel opposing side portions include apertures through which the fasteners communicate with the apertures in the first and second end portions.

23. (original) The assembly of claim 22, wherein each said fastener includes a spring portion and a button, wherein the spring portion provides a bias that pushes the button through a respective one of the apertures in the substantially parallel opposing side portions and a respective one of the apertures in the first and second end portions to fix a position of the substantially horizontal rigid segment with respect to the substantially parallel opposing side portions.

24. (canceled)

25. (previously presented) A bed guard assembly, comprising:
a plurality of end panels;
flexible connecting material for placement beneath a mattress; and
connection pieces that connect the flexible connecting material to the end panels
such that at least one end panel of the plurality of end panels opposes another end panel

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of the plurality of end panels when the flexible connecting material is disposed beneath a mattress;

wherein the end panels include a rigid outer frame and a substantially horizontal rigid segment spanning an interior of the outer frame; and

wherein the rigid outer frame includes a top portion and first and second side portions, and at least one extension that extends at a substantially right angle to a plane defined by the top portion and the first and second side portions.

26. (original) The assembly of claim 25, wherein the at least one extension provides a base that allows the respective end panel to stand upright.

27. (previously presented) The assembly of claim 5, wherein the rigid outer frame includes a number of segments that are removably attached to each other.

28. (previously presented) A bed guard assembly, comprising:

a plurality of end panels;

flexible connecting material for placement beneath a mattress; and

connection pieces that connect the flexible connecting material to the end panels such that at least one end panel of the plurality of end panels opposes another end panel of the plurality of end panels when the flexible connecting material is disposed beneath a mattress;

wherein the end panels include a rigid outer frame and a substantially horizontal rigid segment spanning an interior of the outer frame;

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wherein the end panel includes a fabric portion framed by the rigid outer frame.

29. (original) The assembly of claim 28, wherein the fabric portion includes netting.

30. (original) The assembly of claim 29, wherein the fabric portion includes a nylon border on an outer periphery.

31. (original) The assembly of claim 30, wherein the nylon border includes a sleeve that accepts components of the rigid outer frame.

32. (original) The assembly of claim 28, wherein the fabric portion is removably attached to the rigid outer frame.

33. (original) The assembly of claim 32, wherein the fabric portion is fitted over the rigid outer frame.

34. (original) The assembly of claim 33, wherein the fabric portion is fitted over the substantially horizontal rigid segment.

35. (original) The assembly of claim 33, wherein the fabric portion includes a stretch material that provides a tension fit with the rigid outer frame.

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36. (previously presented) The assembly of claim 5, wherein the connection pieces are rigid structures, and each said connection piece forms a substantially right angle with the respective connected end panel.

37. (original) The assembly of claim 36, wherein the connection pieces are removably attached to the end panels and to the connecting material.

38. (original) The assembly of claim 37, wherein the connection pieces are attached to the end panels by a connection mechanism.

39. (original) The assembly of claim 38, wherein each said connection piece includes a rigid footing attached to the connecting material.

40. (canceled)

41. (currently amended) A bed guard assembly, comprising:
a plurality of end panels;
flexible connecting material for placement beneath a mattress; and
connection pieces that connect the flexible connecting material to the end panels
such that at least one end panel of the plurality of end panels opposes another end panel
of the plurality of end panels when the flexible connecting material is disposed beneath a
mattress;

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wherein the end panels include a rigid outer frame and a substantially horizontal rigid segment spanning an interior of the outer frame;

wherein each said connection piece includes a first end connected to the connecting material and a second end connected to the end panels, and an angled joint between the first and second ends; and

~~The assembly of claim 40,~~ wherein the first end is removably attached to the connecting material and the second end is removably attached to the end panels.

42. (canceled)

43. (currently amended) A bed guard assembly, comprising:
a plurality of end panels;
flexible connecting material for placement beneath a mattress; and
connection pieces that connect the flexible connecting material to the end panels
such that at least one end panel of the plurality of end panels opposes another end panel
of the plurality of end panels when the flexible connecting material is disposed beneath a
mattress;

wherein the end panels include a rigid outer frame and a substantially horizontal rigid segment spanning an interior of the outer frame;

wherein the connection pieces include a mechanism for decreasing the length of connecting material disposed between the end panels; and

~~The assembly of claim 42,~~ wherein the mechanism is a buckle.

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44. (canceled)

45. (currently amended) A bed guard assembly, comprising:
a plurality of end panels;
flexible connecting material for placement beneath a mattress; and
connection pieces that connect the flexible connecting material to the end panels
such that at least one end panel of the plurality of end panels opposes another end panel
of the plurality of end panels when the flexible connecting material is disposed beneath a
mattress;

wherein the end panels include a rigid outer frame and a substantially horizontal
rigid segment spanning an interior of the outer frame;

wherein the connection pieces include a mechanism for reducing an amount of
slack of connecting material disposed between the end panels when the end panels are
disposed in fixed positions; and

~~The assembly of claim 44, wherein the mechanism is a buckle.~~

46. (canceled)

47. (currently amended) A bed guard assembly, comprising:
a plurality of end panels;
flexible connecting material for placement beneath a mattress; and
connection pieces that connect the flexible connecting material to the end panels
such that at least one end panel of the plurality of end panels opposes another end panel

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of the plurality of end panels when the flexible connecting material is disposed beneath a mattress;

wherein the end panels include a rigid outer frame and a substantially horizontal rigid segment spanning an interior of the outer frame;

wherein the connection pieces include a mechanism for reducing an amount of slack of connecting material disposed between the end panels when the connecting material is disposed beneath the mattress and the end panels are placed against opposite sides of the mattress; and

~~The assembly of claim 46,~~ wherein the mechanism is a buckle.

48. (original) The assembly of claim 47, wherein the mechanism includes a strap tensioner in communication with the connecting material, which provides releasable attachment of the mechanism with the connection material.

49. (original) The assembly of claim 48, wherein the mechanism further includes a ratchet device in communication with the strap tensioner, which controls travel of the connecting material with respect to the mechanism.

50. (previously presented) The assembly of claim 5, wherein the connection pieces include a mounting plate that is removably attached to one of the end panels.

51. (previously presented) The assembly of claim 25, wherein the rigid outer frame is made from removably connected rigid tubes.

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52. (previously presented) The assembly of claim 25, wherein the substantially horizontal rigid segment includes a plurality of removably connected rigid tubes.

53. (previously presented) The assembly of claim 25, wherein the plurality of end panels are two end panels.

54. (previously presented) The assembly of claim 25, wherein the rigid outer frame is metal.

55. (previously presented) The assembly of claim 25, wherein the rigid outer frame is steel.

56. (previously presented) The assembly of claim 25, wherein the rigid outer frame includes a number of segments that are removably attached to each other.

57. (previously presented) The assembly of claim 25, wherein the connection pieces are rigid structures, and each said connection piece forms a substantially right angle with the respective connected end panel.

58. (previously presented) The assembly of claim 57, wherein the connection pieces are removably attached to the end panels and to the connecting material.

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59. (previously presented) The assembly of claim 58, wherein the connection pieces are attached to the end panels by a connection mechanism.

60. (previously presented) The assembly of claim 59, wherein each said connection piece includes a rigid footing attached to the connecting material.

61. (previously presented) The assembly of claim 25, wherein each said connection piece includes a first end connected to the connecting material and a second end connected to the end panels, and an angled joint between the first and second ends.

62. (previously presented) The assembly of claim 61, wherein the first end is removably attached to the connecting material and the second end is removably attached to the end panels.

63. (previously presented) The assembly of claim 25, wherein the connection pieces include a mechanism for decreasing the length of connecting material disposed between the end panels.

64. (previously presented) The assembly of claim 63, wherein the mechanism is a huckle.

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65. (previously presented) The assembly of claim 25, wherein the connection pieces include a mechanism for reducing an amount of slack of connecting material disposed between the end panels when the end panels are disposed in fixed positions.

66. (previously presented) The assembly of claim 65, wherein the mechanism is a buckle.

67. (previously presented) The assembly of claim 25, wherein the connection pieces include a mechanism for reducing an amount of slack of connecting material disposed between the end panels when the connecting material is disposed beneath the mattress and the end panels are placed against opposite sides of the mattress.

68. (previously presented) The assembly of claim 67, wherein the mechanism is a buckle.

69. (previously presented) The assembly of claim 68, wherein the mechanism includes a strap tensioner in communication with the connecting material, which provides releasable attachment of the mechanism with the connection material.

70. (previously presented) The assembly of claim 69, wherein the mechanism further includes a ratchet device in communication with the strap tensioner, which controls travel of the connecting material with respect to the mechanism.

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71. (previously presented) The assembly of claim 25, wherein the connection pieces include a mounting plate that is removably attached to one of the end panels.

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